



Woodlawn Primary School

**Safeguarding and
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Designed: September 2020
Reviewed and Updated: June 2023
Reviewed and Updated:

Principal: Miss K McClean

Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Miss K McClean

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Mrs M Beattie

Designated Governor for Child Protection Governance: Mrs H Moore

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INTRODUCTION

The governors and staff of Woodlawn PS fully recognise the contribution they make to the safeguarding of children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part in protecting our pupils from harm.

Parents are asked to work with us by updating school information regularly, disclosing relevant advice on court orders, etc. and by informing the school about anything which could cause distress and change to a child, such as bereavement, family disruption or social problem.

All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by DE 'Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999), Safeguarding and Child protection in Schools, a guide for schools (2017) and the Area Child Protection Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005).

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 states that *the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration* in all decisions concerning the child. This is also reflected in Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – *the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration*. The 'paramount' of the child principle underpins our Child Protection policy and procedures.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. The purpose of the procedures set out in this policy is to safeguard and protect our pupils by ensuring that every adult who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The issue of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
2. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
3. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
4. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
5. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan

THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT WOODLAWN PS

Chair of Governors: Mrs H Moore

Designated Governor for Child Protection Governance: Mrs H Moore

Principal: Miss K McClean

Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Miss K McClean

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Mrs M Beattie

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with preventative education and activities which enable children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is promoted. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection, which refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

In Woodlawn Primary School, the governors and staff adhere to Health and Safety Guidance from EA to ensure the safety of the entire school community. Risk Assessments are completed, and the school employs a full-time Building's Supervisor to maintain the physical property.

Information regarding children will only be shared with family members who have parental responsibility, or where permission has been given by the parents with parental responsibility. When phone calls are made to school, office staff will seek clarity over who is calling before discussing a child. Once again, conversations related to children will only take place between school staff, and those with parental responsibility.

Pupil attendance is monitored closely in Woodlawn Primary School and contact will be made with a family when an absence exceeds 2 school days. More details regarding attendance can be found in the Attendance Policy which is available from the school office.

If a child needs to leave school for an appointment, the office should be contacted in advance of the appointment. When a child leaves school during the school day, they will be signed out in the office by the adult accompanying the child. Children are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day without an adult.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse occurs in families from all social classes and cultures and in communities, agencies and organizations. Abusers come from all walks of life and all occupations and professions. Child abuse can manifest in a number of ways and can involve a combination of the forms of abuse. Those working with children and young people must have an awareness and understanding of the nature and prevalence of different manifestations within their practice area.

It is always preferable to prevent abuse, or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. Through their day-to-day contact with individual children, school staff, especially teachers, but also non-teaching staff, including lunch-time supervisors and ancillary or auxiliary staff, are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms, change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development.

A child in need of protection is a child who is at risk of, or likely to suffer significant harm which can be attributed to a person or persons or organization, either by an act of commission or omission; or a child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm. ‘**Harm**’ means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development, and the question of whether harm is significant is determined in accordance with Article 50(3) of the Children Order. More detail on the concept of harm and significant harm can be found in Section 2.4 of Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (March 2016) and in the Children (NI) Order 1995.

Staff should be alert to all types of abuse and to their legal obligations, including reporting of offences - Section 5 of the **Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967** makes it an offence to fail to disclose an arrestable offence. This includes crimes against children.

Observation of signs and symptoms of possible abuse can do no more than give rise to concern - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. It must always be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. However, teachers and other staff should be aware of the possible implications of, and alert to, all such signs, particularly if they appear in combination or are repeated regularly.

Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he/she must report this immediately to the Designated Teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection. ***The designation of a teacher for this purpose should not be seen as diminishing the role of all members of staff in being alert to signs of abuse and being aware of the procedures to be followed,*** including those in cases where an allegation is made against any member of the school’s staff, teaching or non-teaching (see Section 5.5 on Dealing with Allegations Against a Member of Staff - DE Circular 2015/13).

It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported **immediately** to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is a risk of the child at home.

Pupils who are the victims of abuse often display emotional or behavioural difficulties, which may require a holistic assessment of need to determine appropriate level and types of intervention.

Types of Abuse

Child abuse may take a number of forms, including:

Neglect is the failure to provide for a child’s basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child’s health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

Possible signs or symptoms of neglect include:

- Poor hygiene
- Constant hunger/cramming food
- Inadequate / inappropriate clothing

- Constant tiredness
- Exposed to danger / lack of adequate supervision
- Untreated illness
- Lack of peer relationships
- Compulsive stealing / begging

Physical Abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

- Unexplained bruises (in places difficult to mark)
- Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- Untreated injuries
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Chronic runaway
- Fear of going home

Sexual Abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

- Bruised or sore genitals
- Genital infection
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Inappropriate sexualised language or behaviour
- Low self-esteem
- Chronic depression
- Substance abuse
- Personality changes

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying - including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones - by a child's peers.

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

- Bullying of others

- Change in personality from outgoing to withdrawn
- Difficulty in forming / maintaining relationships with others
- Depression
- Signs of mutilation
- Attention seeking
- Chronic runaway
- Wetting and soiling
- Sudden speech disorders
- Low self-esteem

Exploitation is the intentional ill treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

**All the above definitions are from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016)*

www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland

These types of abuse apply equally to children with disabilities but the abuse may take slightly different forms, for example, lack of supervision, or the use of physical restraints such as being confined to a wheelchair or bed.

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time.

Specific Types of Abuse

The staff of Woodlawn Primary will endeavour to be alert to signs that may indicate specific types of abuse, and take early action in line with their safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures to enable preventative action to be taken, if possible, before harm occurs.

Grooming - involves perpetrator(s) gaining the trust of the child or young person or, in some cases, the trust of the family, friends or community, and/or making an emotional connection with the victim in order to facilitate abuse before the abuse begins. This may involve providing money, gifts, drugs and/or alcohol or more basic needs such as food, accommodation or clothing to develop the child's/young person's loyalty to and dependence upon the person(s) doing the grooming.

Child Sexual Exploitation - CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. CSE does not always involve physical contact and can happen online.

Domestic and Sexual Violence Abuse - 'threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual

orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.’ At least 15,000 children are estimated to be living in a culture of/or are survivors of violence in the home.

Female Genital Mutilation – Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as ‘cutting’, ‘female circumcision’ and ‘initiation’. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. The majority of cases are thought to take place between the ages of five and eight, putting children in this age bracket at highest risk.

Harmful Sexualised behaviour -

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexual nature that takes place when:

- There is no informed consent by the victim; and/or
- The perpetrator uses threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate the victim

Harmful sexualised behaviour can include:

- Using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual violence or threats.
- Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older - particularly if there is more than two years’ difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not.
- However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled.

Bullying

Ref: Woodlawn Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

The Anti-Bullying Policy is under review this year, as we endeavour as a whole school staff, to make positive changes in light of the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse. At Woodlawn Primary we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment. Staff are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school.

Our **Anti-Bullying Policy** is a separate policy and acknowledges that, to allow or condone bullying, may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying behaviours, and will take immediate steps to record incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviours including the motivation, method, how the incident was addressed and the outcome. Parents of both

the child displaying bullying behaviour and the child experiencing bullying will be personally contacted when bullying has been identified.

Any complaints by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the Principal and Safeguarding Team and action will be taken to support the children involved. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the Principal or DT within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation that has been carried out and the actions taken.

All incidents that are reported as bullying will be recorded. The school will record whether the alleged incident of bullying is confirmed and responded to through the Anti-Bullying policy or is deemed as unacceptable behaviour and responded to through the procedures outlined in the Positive Behaviour Policy.

E-Safety/Internet Abuse

Online safety means acting and staying safe when using digital technologies. It is wider than simply internet technology and includes electronic communication via text messages, social environments and apps, and using games consoles through any digital device.

Woodlawn Primary has a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of pupils accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and will be energetic in teaching pupils how to act responsibly and keep themselves safe. As a result, pupils should have a clear understanding of online safety issues and, individually, be able to demonstrate what a positive digital footprint might look like.

Any instances of electronic bullying will be taken seriously by the Safeguarding Team and responded to in line with the Anti-Bullying Policy.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED (OR DISCLOSED) CHILD ABUSE

The designated teacher for child protection (DT) is **Miss McClean**.

In her absence the deputy designated teacher for child protection (DDT) is **Mrs M Beattie**. She will assume responsibility for child protection.

1. Detection

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, **the member of staff must act promptly**.

The following are guidelines for use by staff should a child disclose concerns of a Child Protection nature.

Do	Do Not
Listen to what the child says	Ask leading questions
Assure the child they are not at fault	Put word's in the child's mouth

<p>Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret</p> <p>Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words</p> <p>Remember not to promise the child confidentiality</p> <p>Stay Calm</p> <p>Listen</p> <p>Accept</p> <p>Reassure</p> <p>Explain what you are going to do</p> <p>Record accurately</p> <p>Seek support for yourself</p>	<p>Ignore the child's behaviour</p> <p>Remove any clothing</p> <p>Panic</p> <p>Promise to keep secrets</p> <p>Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily</p> <p>Delay</p> <p>Start to investigate</p> <p>Do nothing</p>
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2. Referral to Designated Teacher

The staff member should not investigate - this is a matter for social services, but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with her, make full notes (signing and dating them), and hand the note to the DT.

3. Action Planning

The DT in consultation with other members of the safeguarding team and/or The Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) will plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

4. Action

The DT, in consultation with the Principal, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to social services. **If there are concerns that the child may be at risk of significant harm, the school is obliged to make a referral to social services and /or the PSNI.** Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.

The DT may seek clarification or advice and consult with The Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) or a senior social worker before a referral is made. No decisions to refer a child to social services will be made without full consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our first priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the DT may inform:

- Social Services
- The Child Protection Support Service (CPSS)
- A referral may be made using the Understanding the needs of Children in Northern Ireland (UNOCINI) referral form and forwarded to Referral Gateway in Northern Health and Social Services Trust.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the DT if the Principal is unavailable) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the designated teacher or the Principal). Where the matter is referred to social services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations by social services. The Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against the Principal, the DT must be informed immediately. She will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will take appropriate advice and ensure the necessary action is taken.

School Management will ensure that the DE guidance is adhered to with particular reference to Circular 2015/13 <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/2015-13-dealing-with-allegations-of-abuse-against-a-member-of-staff.pdf>

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise signs or symptoms of possible child abuse, he/she should talk with the DT.

It should be noted that the information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'. In the interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be informed.

ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER (DT) AND DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHER (DDT)

The DT:

- To provide training to all school staff including support staff
- Being available to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Responsibility for recordkeeping of all child protection concerns
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units
- Liaising with The Child Protection Support Service (CPSS)
- The lead responsibility for the development and updating of the school's child protection policy
- Ensures parents receive a copy of the child protection policy every 2 years which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made to Social Services and the role of the school regarding this
- Promotion of a child protection ethos in the school
- Written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection
- Maintains all records pertaining to child protection in a secure location (accessed only by the Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher and the School Principal as appropriate)

DDT:

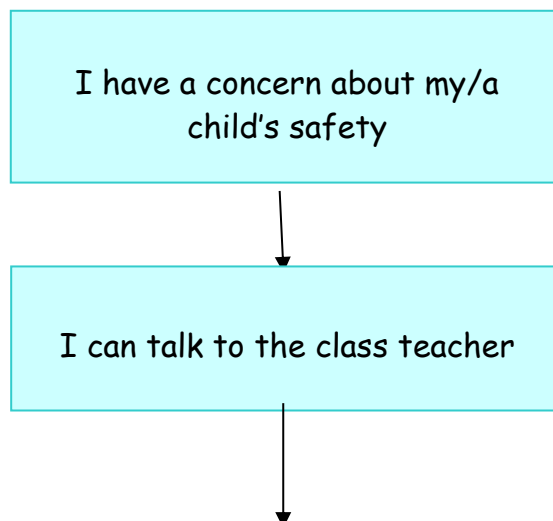
- To support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required

Training

Governors, Principal, DT for Child Protection and DDT for Child Protection will receive update training in line with the EA's programmes. Training of staff will take place annually. Any member of staff who misses CP training will receive mop-up training during the term.

HOW A PARENT CAN MAKE A RAISE A CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN

If a parent has a child protection concern they can follow the guide below:





WOODLAWN PS'S VETTING PROCEDURES

The selection and appointment process is the starting point for ensuring that only those who are suitable are employed to work in close proximity with children, in either a paid or unpaid capacity on our school.

In order for all reasonable steps to be taken to employ and engage suitable staff to work with the children in our care, we follow the guidance provided by the Department of Education on pre-employment checking and safe recruitment practices. Woodlawn has adopted the new arrangements for the vetting and checking of staff prior to appointment or volunteering within the school:

- DE Circular 2006/06: Child protection: Recruitment of People to Work with Children and Young People in Educational Settings
- DE Circular 2006/07: Child Protection: Employment of Substitute Teachers
- DE Circular 2006/08: Child Protection: Training Requirements for School Governors on Staff Recruitment and Selection Panels

- DE Circular 2006/09: Child Protection: Criminal Background Checking of staff in Schools – programme to extend coverage
- DE Circular 2006/25: Child Protection: Vetting of School Governors
- DE Circular 2008/03: Pre-Employment Checking of Persons to Work in Schools – New Arrangements
- DE Circular 2008/10: Employment of Substitute Teachers
- DE Circular 2012/19: Disclosure and Barring Arrangements
- DE Circular 2013/01: Disclosure and Barring Arrangements
- DE Circular 2016/20: Child Protection- Record Keeping in Schools

Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website. Click on 'Circulars': www.deni.gov.uk

All staff whether paid or unpaid are inducted in our Safeguarding Children/ Child Protection Policy.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF

All staff – permanent and non-permanent and volunteers know the code of conduct. It reflects the safeguarding ethos of the school and is set out in Appendix 2

GUIDANCE FOR VOLUNTEERS

The school will ensure that volunteers supply two good references and submit to a criminal record check upon appointment. AccessNI carries out criminal record checks.

THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm of our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protections. An awareness of "stranger danger"; an understanding of how to respond to perceived threats; care in regard to e-safety; and the development of standards of behaviour that are appropriate for primary school children are all reinforced through the school's work on PDMU within the Northern Ireland Curriculum. They are also the focus of assemblies, visits from outside professionals and on-going guidance opportunities as they arise, such as circle time.

Alongside the use of curricular resources, we also use Women's Aid materials, the NSPCC speak out campaign and Childline in Schools. Internet safety is addressed by using CEOP resources and materials and contact with PSNI.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty; and

- Include in the curriculum opportunities for Personal and Social Development which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to whom they should turn for help if the need arises.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Our policy on physical restraint by staff is set out in a separate policy **Reasonable Force and Safeguarding Policy**, in accordance with guidelines from EA-NE Region. It acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The **Health and Safety Policy**, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

E-Safety

Our **policy on the Internet and digital technologies** is set out in a separate document and is informed by DE guidance. It acknowledges the opportunities for learning as well as the risks attached to the Internet and digital technologies. Specifically, it addresses safeguarding issues that may arise in the use of the Internet and digital technologies.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGES OF CHILDREN

Our practice on taking and using photographs is shared on our initial letter to parents in August. It explains usage of photographs and what parents should do if they have any concerns.

OPERATION ENCOMPASS

We are an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between local Police and our school, aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence and abuse. As a school, we recognise that children's exposure to domestic violence is a traumatic event for them.

Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure. Domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling the provision of immediate support. This rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short, medium and long-term effects of domestic abuse.

As an Operation Encompass school, when the police have attended a domestic incident and one of our pupils is present, they will make contact with the school at the start of the next working day to share this information with a member of the school safeguarding team. This will allow the school safeguarding team to provide immediate emotional support to this child as well as giving the designated teacher greater insight into any wider safeguarding concerns.

This information will be treated in strict confidence, like any other category of child protection information. It will be processed as per DE Circular 2020/07 'Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools' and a note will be made in the child's child protection file. The information received on an Operation Encompass call from the Police will only be shared outside of the safeguarding team on a proportionate and need to know basis. All members of the safeguarding team will complete online Operation Encompass training, so they are able to take these calls. Any staff responsible for answering the phone at school will be made aware of Operation Encompass and the need to pass these calls on with urgency to a member of the Safeguarding team.

Further information see The Domestic Abuse Information Sharing with Schools etc. Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS / VISITS

Our school trip is run following the guidelines outlined in 'Educational Visits', Best Practice 2009. Day trips and visits are consistently planned across the school.

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

The **Intimate Care Policy**, set out in a separate document, reflects our intention to develop independence in each child, whilst recognising that all children have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.

REVIEWING OUR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Our Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually.

Date of next review: September 2022

Appendix 1

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers have an important and beneficial role in supporting the work of teachers and other support staff in Woodlawn PS and in contributing, by their efforts and initiative, to the life of the school.

It is essential however, that appropriate steps are taken, through screening and selection arrangements, to ensure that children are not placed at risk through allowing the unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to the school.

Who is a Volunteer?

A volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory procedures below, either

1. Assumes unpaid duties in a school on a regular basis on more than two occasions or
2. Is engaged by the school to accompany or assist in school visits or trips; residential activities or to undertake coaching in sports activities.

Formal arrangements as to selection and vetting should not be required for volunteers who are involved outside school hours and who do not have unsupervised contact with pupils. These would include fund-raisers, people using school premises for meetings etc.

Use of Volunteers

There are three main categories into which the use of volunteers might be grouped and to which guidance will apply:

- During school hours involving direct contact with pupils
- Outside school hours involving direct contact with pupils
- During school hours but not usually involving direct contact with pupils

Recruiting and Selecting Volunteers

The school may canvass for volunteers or people may come forward to offer assistance at their own initiative. In many cases the school may already know potential volunteers. Others may come forward from the local community. Engagement of volunteers is only undertaken with agreement of the Board of Governors.

Initial Appraisal

As a minimum requirement all potential volunteers are asked to provide the following information:

- personal details
- qualifications and previous work with children
- a declaration that they have never been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound-over Order
- a declaration as to whether they have been investigated by Social Services for child protection
- agree to a criminal record being carried out
- provide the name of two referees who are not family members or members of staff in the school
- attend an interview with the school Principal with proof of identity
- Undergo an annual criminal record check through Access NI (via NEELB)

No individual will be admitted to the school as a volunteer until these basic steps have been completed and the results assessed.

Accepting Volunteers

Where the previous procedures have been followed as appropriate and the school is satisfied that:

- the volunteer is a suitable person to have contact with the children and has the character, skills and experience to support the work of the school in a voluntary capacity;
- well defined and worthwhile activities have been identified for the volunteer to undertake and he/she is competent to undertake them;

the school will notify the individual that he/she has been accepted for voluntary duties in the school

The use of Volunteers

These are the fundamental principles observed when using volunteers:

- the purpose of the volunteer is to assist staff, whether teaching or non-teaching. They are not used as substitutes either to cover activities normally undertaken by paid staff who are absent, or to release such staff to undertake other duties:

- volunteers only work under the supervision and guidance of paid staff and these arrangements should be such as to minimise the opportunities for direct, unsupervised, access to children;
- volunteers are not placed in a position of sole responsibility for the security of children, premises or equipment;
- volunteers should understand the tasks they are to undertake and receive appropriate training to enable them to perform these;
- volunteers are only allocated duties after consultation and agreement with the teacher or other member of staff with whom the volunteer will be closely involved. Teachers are not to be placed under any pressure to accept a volunteer in their classroom;
- volunteers are not afforded access to records or other information relating to staff or pupils. An exception might be made where a child has a medical or other condition of which all those working with the pupil should be made aware, and where agreement of the parent has been sought.

Health and Safety Insurance

Volunteers are owed a duty of care under the requirements of Health and Safety Legislation. Woodlawn PS therefore ensures that volunteers are treated no less favourably than paid employees in terms of Woodlawn PS's obligations under the legislation.

Duration

Woodlawn PS places a time limit on the period of the volunteer's service. This is done where the work earmarked for the volunteer is likely to be completed within a specific period. Where a volunteer's involvement is likely to be long term, the school advises the volunteer that he/she will be subject to a trial period, during which the Principal monitors the volunteer's effectiveness in contributing to the life and work of the school.

Information and Training

The school ensures that the volunteer receives such information, guidance, preparation, and where necessary, training to enable him/her to perform tasks effectively. As a minimum, volunteers are briefed on:

- the policy of the school and the management authority in relation to pastoral care and child protection, including its behaviour/discipline policy, including rewards and sanctions, and the extent of the volunteer's authority within it; its child protection procedures
- Woodlawn PS's Health and Safety Policy

Arrangements are made for the volunteer to have a formal line of communication to the Principal for reporting issues of concern or the welfare of the children in the school.

School Security

Woodlawn PS has drawn on the advice from the guidance Document “Security and Personal Safety in Schools” 1997 to establish arrangements for the admission and supervision of volunteers on school premises. Particular attention is drawn to:

- The volunteer registering at the beginning of each visit
- Providing the volunteer with a readily identifiable name badge or pass giving his/her name and status

The school ensures passes are surrendered at the end of each day and when the volunteers’ involvement with the school comes to an end.

Appendix 2

A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF

(Pastoral Care in Schools CHILD PROTECTION 1999)

INTRODUCTION

All staff have personal and legal responsibilities, including treating others with dignity and respect, acting honestly, using school funds and equipment appropriately, adhering to the health and safety guidelines and practising equal opportunities at all times. These expectations are set out below and should be fully observed by all staff.

This document is not a prescriptive guide to what staff should and should not do. It highlights the areas where staff need to be aware of their responsibilities when working in the school and is a framework for behaviour. All staff should be familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours. If these documents are not supplied at induction, they should be requested from the Principal.

All actions concerning children must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must be mindful that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the children in their care must be beyond reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children gain from positive interactions with staff but rather to safeguard and advise.

The Principal should ensure that:

- all staff are aware of the Code of Conduct's content and are fully briefed on its implications;
- reference is made to this Code of Conduct in the induction of new staff;
- the policies on which this Code of Conduct is based are up to date and available to staff.

EXCLUSIVITY OF SERVICE

Staff's off-duty hours are their personal concern but they should avoid a position where duty and private interests conflict. The school does not seek to preclude staff unreasonably from undertaking additional employment but you are required to devote your full time, attention and abilities to your duties during your working hours and to act in the best interests of the school at all times.

RELATIONSHIPS

All staff should:

- observe confidentiality in respect of any discussions with other individual staff members about their professional problems, personal problems and difficulties;
- ensure consultation between staff takes place in an atmosphere of mutual respect for the professional expertise and a recognition and understanding of the responsibilities of those involved;
- ensure they maintain the delicate balance between taking a close interest in the welfare of the pupils and entering into discussions about the conduct, competence or efficiency of other staff members.

Staff should not:

- enter into an improper relationship with a pupil;
- show undue personal favour or disfavour towards a pupil;
- commit such acts against a child which are illegal;
- deliberately behave in such a way as to bring the school into disrepute;
- behave in an offensive or discriminatory manner (e.g. racist, political, religious, sexual or homophobic) or make offensive or discriminatory remarks directed toward or about others.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

Professional behaviour is a generic term but within this Code of Conduct it includes such aspects as:

- acting in a fair, courteous and mature manner to pupils, colleagues and other stakeholders;
- co-operating and liaising with colleagues, as appropriate, to ensure pupils receive a coherent and comprehensive educational service;
- endeavouring to assist the school to achieve its corporate and strategic objectives – in particular, by adopting a positive attitude to marketing and the achievement of quality and equality;
- respect for school property;
- maintaining the image of the school through standards of dress, general courtesy, correct use of school property and stationery;
- taking responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of the pupils in the classroom and sharing such responsibility elsewhere on the premises;
- being fit for work;

- being familiar with job requirements (e.g. proper preparations, use of suitable methods/systems, maintenance of records) including keeping up to date with developments relevant to the job;
- being familiar with communication channels and school procedures for staff and pupils;
- ensuring assessments and exams are carried out in a fair and proper manner and that procedures are followed with respect to confidentiality and security;
- respect for the rights and opinions of others.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The staff should:

- adhere to the school's Health and Safety Policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well;
- take immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at school or off site) by complying with statutory and school guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority;
- take care of their personal hygiene, safety and welfare, and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts and omissions;
- familiarise themselves with the fire precautions, procedures and drill routines and ensure practice drills are perceived by pupils as an essential precaution to prevent the risk of injury or fatality.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff should maintain the appropriate levels of confidentiality with respect to pupil and staff records and other sensitive matters. They should take care not to discuss issues of particularly sensitive matters within the school community which could cause distress to school staff, pupils or parents.

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure the school's compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation. Personal data must only be used to assist you to carry out your work. It must not be given to people who have no right to see it. All staff should maintain the security of all computerised databases of information on individuals, whether they are staff, pupils or members of the general public. All personal pupil files should be kept in a locked cupboard or cabinet. Staff should refer any queries to the Principal. Arrangements are in place within the school to have sensitive data destroyed as appropriate.

Members of staff are expected to treat any information about pupils in a discreet and confidential manner. Staff should not disclose sensitive information about the school, including its pupils and staff to other parties, for example, parents/carers and colleagues or on social media sites. There are particular exceptions to this, for example, disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection officers.

SOCIAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils of the school, except when this is in the context of facilitating friendships for their own children who attend the school or in the context of a personal relationship with the family. This includes giving any personal details to a pupil such as a home/mobile telephone number or a personal email address. Staff should not engage in communication via social media with any pupils.

USE OF SCHOOL COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

The school has the right to monitor internet activity using the C2k system or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect the systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems by staff. Staff should be aware that the school has the right to access employees' work email and computer files stored on the school system if required for investigation of misuse. Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential. Employees who receive inappropriate communications should inform the Principal or Vice Principal immediately.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES OR PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY

Staff members should refrain from using their mobile phones or personal technology when in contact with children and should wait until an appropriate break to employ devices for personal use. Staff should not use their personal mobile phone or personal technology to take photographs/videos of the pupils.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The use of social media sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter etc.) is now commonplace with the result that the lines between work and personal life can become blurred. To protect staff, pupils and the reputation of the school, the following guidelines should be implemented:

- staff should not use the C2k system in personal social media activities;
- staff should only post on school social media sites from their school accounts
- under no circumstances should offensive or discriminatory comments be made about work colleagues on the internet.

If staff use social media sites for personal use they are reminded that they have a responsibility to ensure they are posting comments or images that are not detrimental to their position as a member of staff at this school, to the privacy or rights of the pupil, or to the reputation of the school. **A common sense and safe approach to the use of social media websites is recommended.**

TIMEKEEPING

Members of staff are reminded of the importance of punctuality at all times of the day including:

- teachers' directed time;
- duty before/during school;
- meetings or events.

If, for whatever reason, a member of staff is going to be late they should contact the school office from 8am OR Principal, Vice Principal from 7am. If a member of staff needs to leave work early or has to attend an appointment, this should be discussed with the Principal or Vice Principal.

Teaching staff have core hours to work in line with school's 'directed time'. Non-teaching staff have contracted set hours but should be on site at least five minutes before their start time, as would be expected in any place of employment.

ILLNESSES/ABSENCE

If a member of staff becomes ill or is unable to be in work for any reason, they should contact the Principal or Vice Principal. If notifying the Principal or Vice Principal of an illness or absence, they should not be contacted at home before 7a.m. or after 10p.m. If a member of staff is not in school and knows they will not be in school the next day, they should contact the

school office during the school day and as early as possible to allow arrangements to be put in place to cover the absence.

All members of staff are referred to the Education Authority Occupational Health Department after twenty consecutive days of absence or repeated absences due to illness.

All personal appointments, including medical and dental, should be made out of school hours whenever possible. If a member of staff needs to leave school for any such appointment they should inform the Principal or Vice Principal.

All specific matters relating to Attendance and Absence of employed Teaching and Non-Teaching staff should refer to DE TNC 2008-2 circular updated 2011 and EA Managing Attendance Policy updated June 2015.

DRESS CODE

Staff should dress in a manner that is appropriate to the tasks of their post, their professional status and their position as a role model for primary school children. Whilst the school has a 'smart casual' approach to work attire, the staff should adopt a 'dress for your day' approach, using professional judgement to decide when more formal clothing is required to give the best impression of the school and its staff.

USE OF ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUGS

The taking of illegal drugs will not be tolerated. All staff members are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or drugs that may adversely impact their ability to carry out their duties or may call into question their consideration for the welfare of the children in their care, school reputation and public confidence.

USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT OR PREMISES

School equipment and premises are available only for school related activities and should not be used for fulfilment of another job or post or for excessive or regular personal use, unless authorised in advance by the Principal or Vice Principal. This includes photocopy facilities, stationery, telephones, computers and premises. Any school equipment that is used outside school premises, for example, laptops, iPads etc., should be returned to the school when the member of staff leaves employment or upon request by the Principal or Vice Principal.

CONCLUSION

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelate with children and young people, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur. If a member of staff has any doubts about the contents of this document or how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult the Principal, Vice Principal, Senior Teacher or a representative of their professional association. It is emphasised that this Code of Conduct is intended to be a reference to enable fairness and clarity among all staff.

Appendix 3

Emergency Contact Details

PSNI:	0845 600 8000 028 9065 0222 or 101
Child Protection School Support Service (CPSSS)	028 9448 2223
Social Services, Gateway Team:	0300 1234 333
Out of Hours Duty Social Worker	028 9504 9999
NSPCC Adult Helpline (For adults concerned about a child):	0808 800 5000 or Text: 88858
24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline:	0808 802 1414
Childline:	0800 1111
Child Sexual Exploitation Helpline NSPCC:	0800 389 1701